

14. (amended) A method for raising the pH of a consumable food or beverage product before consumption of said food or beverage product comprising:

mixing with said food or beverage product, an effective amount of a liquefied soluble acidity reducing formulation comprising: (i) from about 15% to about 20% by weight of an edible bicarbonate; (ii) a soluble binder; (iii) water and (iv) optionally, a preservative, wherein the weight of the edible bicarbonate is based on the total weight of the edible bicarbonate, soluble binder and water, and wherein the formulation substantially excludes acidulant components.

15. (amended) The method for raising the pH of a consumable food or beverage product before consumption, according to claim 14, wherein said food product is a beverage.

16. (amended) The method for raising the pH of a consumable food or beverage product before consumption, according to claim 14, wherein an effective amount of said formulation is added to said food or beverage product to raise the pH of the food or beverage product from about 0.5 to about 2 pH units.

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17. (amended) A method for raising the pH of a consumable food or beverage product before consumption of said food or beverage product comprising:

mixing with said food or beverage product, an effective amount of a liquefied soluble acidity reducing formulation consisting essentially of: (i) an edible bicarbonate; (ii) a soluble binder; (iii) water; and (iv) optionally, a preservative, wherein the formulation substantially excludes acidulant components.

18. (amended) The method for raising the pH of a consumable food or beverage product before consumption, according to claim 17, wherein said food or beverage product is a beverage.

19. (amended) The method for raising the pH of a consumable food or beverage product before consumption, according to claim 17, wherein an effective amount of said formulation is added to said food or beverage product to raise the pH of the food or beverage product from about 0.5 to about 2 pH units.

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21. (amended) The packaged acid-containing food product, according to claim 20, wherein said formulation excludes acidulant components.

Please add new claims 22-29 as follows:

22. (new) The liquefied soluble acidity reducing formulation, according to claim 5, wherein the edible bicarbonate is selected from the group consisting of sodium bicarbonate, calcium bicarbonate and potassium bicarbonate.

23. (new) The liquefied soluble acidity reducing formulation, according to claim 5, wherein the soluble binder is selected from the group consisting of cornstarch, wheat flower, arrowroot, xanthan gum, gum arabic, guar gum, agar agar, locust bean gum, gum tragacanth, cellulose gums and mixtures thereof.

24. (new) The liquefied soluble acidity reducing formulation, according to claim 23, wherein the soluble binder is cornstarch.

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25. (new) The liquefied soluble acidity reducing formulation, according to claim 23, wherein the soluble binder is xanthan gum.

26. (new) The liquefied soluble acidity reducing formulation, according to claim 25, wherein the formulation includes from about 0.5 to about 1 part of propylene glycol.

27. (new) The liquefied soluble acidity reducing formulation, according to claim 5, wherein the preservative is present and is selected from the group consisting of sodium benzoate and potassium sorbate.

28. (new) The liquefied soluble acidity reducing formulation, according to claim 5, wherein said formulation includes less than about 1% by weight of said preservative, based on the weight of the bicarbonate and the soluble binder.